



# **Request for Qualifications For Administration of the 2016 Summer Sprout Program**

**Requested by:**      **City of Cleveland, Department of  
Community Development  
601 Lakeside Avenue, room 320  
Cleveland, OH 44114**

**Proposal Due Date: August 31, 2015**

1. **Introduction:** The Cleveland Department of Community Development is seeking qualifications from non-profit organizations to enter into a one-year contract to administer the Summer Sprout Community Garden Program for the 2016 season.
2. **Background:** The Summer Sprout Program is the City's community gardening program. Garden groups of five people or more from around the City apply to the program for support in establishing or continuing a community garden on vacant parcels.

The program provides successful applicants, as necessary, rotor-tilling of the site at the beginning of the year, vegetable seeds, plants, humus, fertilizer and materials to construct raised beds. Throughout the year the program offers gardening classes and on-site technical assistance to the participating gardeners.

The City anticipates approximately 200 gardens will participate.

3. **Administrator Responsibilities:**

**JANUARY and FEBRUARY:** Conduct community garden workshops. Verify continuation of established groups (i.e. participating gardens from 2015 season). Submit names of Garden Leaders to The Department of Community Development which will prepare licenses to distribute to gardeners for signing. Order necessary vegetable seed packets. Notify growers of 2016 plants needed.

**MARCH:** Kick off meeting for Garden Leaders. Garden Leaders return signed licenses. Contact Water Department to issue hydrant permits at garden meeting. Distribute vegetable seeds, plan for soil preparation, soil amendment deliveries, and humus deliveries.

**APRIL:** Begin planning to recruit new garden groups. Soil preparation and humus deliveries continue. Collect soil samples from garden groups for testing of all new sites not previously tested.

**MAY:** Soil preparation, tilling, lumber, and humus deliveries continue. Vegetable plants and fertilizer are distributed to Garden Leaders. Remaining executed licenses must be returned to the Department of Community Development.

**JUNE:** Distribution of donated vegetable plants and flowers as available from growers. Provide support to new garden groups. Distribution of Summer Sprout signs to new gardeners. Tilling completed and workshops continue.

**JULY, AUGUST, and SEPTEMBER:** Evaluate gardens for continuation in program. Provide written evaluation to garden leaders. Finalize and prepare new garden groups with workshops and mentorship

opportunities for possible fall planting or participation next year. Work with gardeners to prepare for annual training and networking meetings. Welcome meeting for new Summer Sprout Gardeners. Deadline for new Summer Sprout application (mid-August). Applications for Land bank property must submit to Department of Community Development. Continue mid-year site visits and collect data. Soil sampling of new garden sites begin.

**OCTOBER:** Gardening season ends and Summer Sprout renewal forms are due. Fall soil preparation at large sites. Begin development of 2017 contract with the Cleveland Department of Community Development, pending availability of funds.

**NOVEMBER:** Year-end training and visioning meeting. Prepare year-end reports. Submit names of garden groups who are applying to continue or establish community gardens on City of Cleveland, Land Bank lots to the Land Bank program. Submit names of garden groups who are applying to continue or establish community gardens on all other City-owned land (not including land owned by the Cleveland School Board) to the City of Cleveland, Office of Capital Projects, Attn: Commissioner of Real Estate. Garden groups applying to continue or establish gardens on City of Cleveland Property (including Land Bank lots) will not be admitted to the program prior to receiving approval for the use of the property from either the Land Bank or Department of Capital Projects. A list of Summer Sprout Garden Leaders will be submitted to the Department of Community Development Land Bank program for processing.

**DECEMBER:** Annual report prepared for City. Finalize next year's contract pending availability of funds. The City reserves the right to modify the Administrator responsibility at any time before execution of contract to add, delete or otherwise amend any items, as it sees necessary in its sole judgement in the best interest of the City.

- 4. Contract Goals/Deliverables:** The successful applicant will be expected to assist the City in achieving its goal of funding and completing (200) gardens City-wide and supporting at least one garden in each of the city's neighborhoods. However, the successful applicant will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- Number of applications reviewed
- Number of gardens maintained by program
- Number of gardens sustained through the growing season
- Number and quality of workshops provided
- Providing service equally to all garden sites
- Quality of general customer service provided
- Ability to communicate program needs to City Staff
- Ability to respond to requests from City Staff
- Quality and accuracy of all program related paperwork

5. **Contract Terms:** Contract term will begin January 1, 2016 and expire December 31, 2016. The successful applicant may be invited to contract for the 2017 season based on program evaluation.

Payments will be issued on a reimbursement basis, based on a submission of invoices and cancelled checks demonstrating eligible costs consistent with the contract.

The selected agency will be responsible for providing its own work space, classroom space and equipment as necessary to perform the required duties. Specifically, the selected administrator must own, or have reasonable access to, a cell phone, computer, printer, scanner, copy machine, email account, and vehicle to successfully perform the required duties.

6. **Administrator Qualifications:** The selected administrator should possess the following skills:

- Must be a 501(c) (3) organization in good standing with the Ohio Secretary of State;
- Ability to manage various and diverse tasks at one time;
- Experience with urban agriculture and community gardening best practices;
- Ability to effectively recruit applicants and administer an application process for a scattered site city-wide program;
- Ability to coordinate activities with City departments, including the Office of Capital Projects, the Department of Community Development Land Bank, and Water Department.
- Ability to monitor nearly 200 Summer Sprout gardens city-wide and enforce compliance with program rules, particularly keeping the garden well maintained and consistent with city code.

7. **Application questions:**

Please attach written answers to the following questions with your response to the RFQ. Each answer should be no longer than approximately 500 words.

A) Identify the staff person who will be tasked with managing this program and include a one-page resume outlining relevant experience.

B) List all supporting staff (if any) who will assist in the management of the program, describe their role and include a one-page resume outlining relevant experience.

C) Describe your organizations experience with managing scattered site urban agriculture programs. Indicate on how many sites, and over what geographic scope, these programs operated.

D) List the locations of urban agriculture or community garden sites your organization currently maintains, if any.

E) Provide a proposed 2016 budget for the activities on paragraph 3 "Administrator responsibilities. Include expenses for staff, program materials, and necessary contractual services.

G) Describe how your organization would approach the completion of the activities out lines in section 3. Include a description of delegation of staff time.

F) Describe programs, other than the Summer Sprout program, your organization plans to operate in 2016 that will enhance the experience of the 2016 summer sprout participants.

**8. RFQ Submission Requirements and Deadline**

Interested parties should submit, via email, the following items: a cover letter, current resume(s) and answers to the Application questions listed above.

Submissions will be reviewed by the City of Cleveland's Land Bank program staff, the Commissioner of Neighborhood Development and the Director of Community Development. Decisions will be weighted towards proven experience and the ability to undertake multiple/diverse tasks requiring equal attention. Interviews (in person or by phone) will be conducted only if necessary. If a proposal does not comply with all terms, conditions, and requirements for submittal, the City may consider it unacceptable and may reject it without further consideration.

Questions regarding the RFQ can be directed to Mrs. Stephanie D. Ashford, Development Officer, City of Cleveland at 216-664-4089.

Submissions are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 31, 2015.

**ANY SUBMISSION RECEIVED AFTER 5:00 ON AUGUST 31, 2015  
WILL NOT BE REVIEWED OR CONSIDERED.**

Only PDF files will be accepted. Submissions should be emailed to:

Stephanie D. Ashford  
City of Cleveland, Department of Community Development  
601 Lakeside Ave. Room 320  
Cleveland, OH 44114  
Email: [sashford@city.cleveland.oh.us](mailto:sashford@city.cleveland.oh.us)